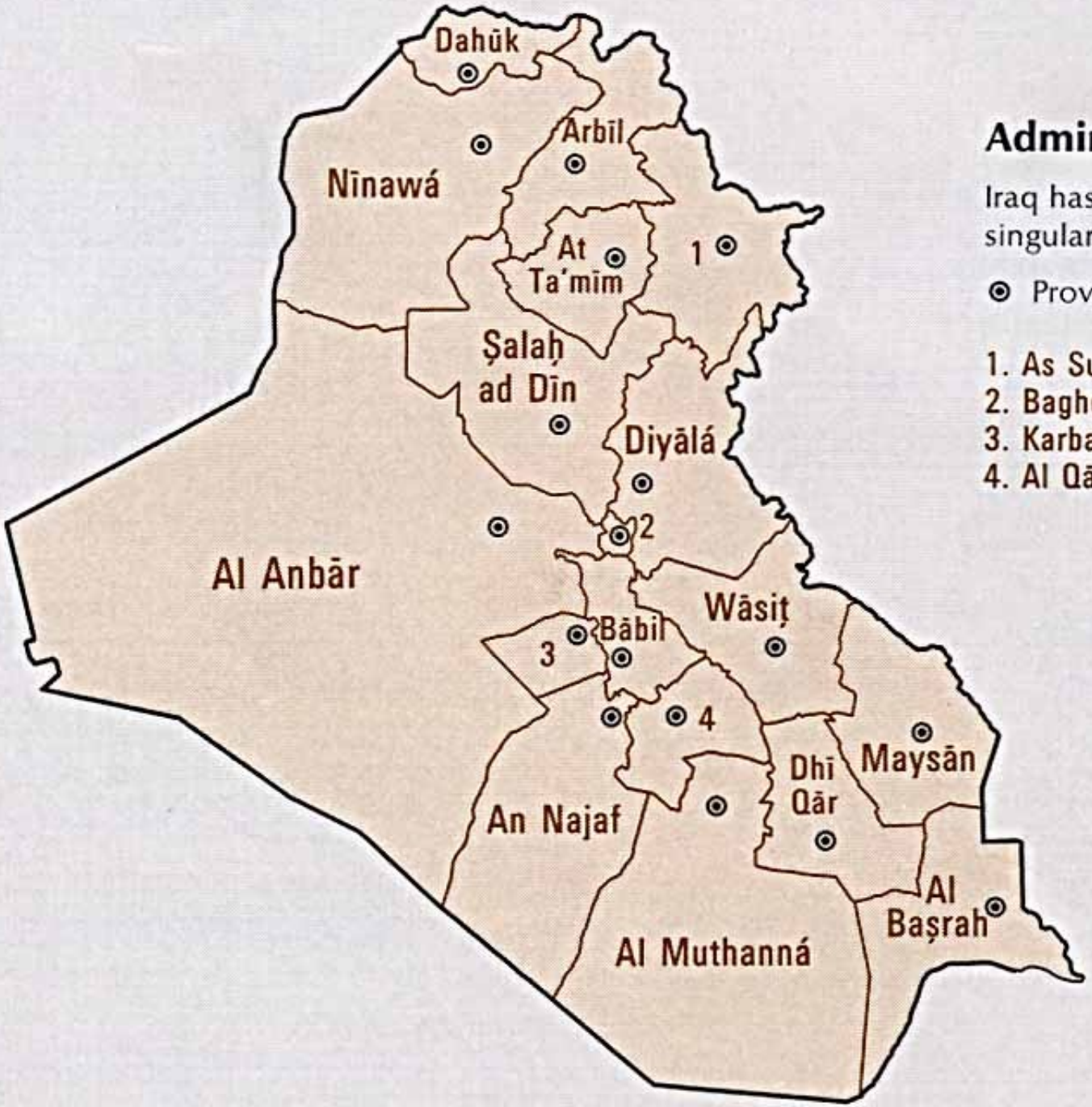
IRAQI CULTURAL AND POLITICAL GROUPS

AIM

TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SECTS OF ISLAM AND THE IMPORTANCE IN THE POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF IRAQ.



Administrative Divisions

Iraq has 18 provinces (*muḥāfaẓat*, singular *muḥāfaẓah*).

⊙ Province capital

1. As Sulaymānīyah
2. Baghdād
3. Karbalā'
4. Al Qādisīyah

Ethnic group	Estimated population	Religion	Language
Arabs	**75%**	**Muslims** **Christians**	**Arabic**
Kurds	**18%**	**Muslims**	**Kurdish**
Minorities Turkmen Assyrians	**7%**	**Muslims** **Christians** **Others**	Arabic Turkish Aramaic

IRAQI CULTURAL GROUPS

- **ARABS 70%**
- **KURDS 20%**
- **OTHERS 10%**

IRAQI CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS GROUPS

- MUSLIMS 97%
  - SUNNI 32%-37%
  - SHI'A 60%-65%
- OTHER 3%
  - CHRISTIANS
  - JEWS

SHI’A

BELIEVE THAT THE SUCCESSION OF LEADERSHIP FOR THE ISLAMIC FAITH BELONGS TO THE DIRECT RELATIVES AND DESCENDANTS OF THE PROPHET MOHAMMED, ESPECIALLY HIS COUSIN ALI.

SUNNI

BELIEVE THAT THE SUCCESSION SHOULD BE IN THE HANDS OF ANY MAN WHO IS RECOGNIZED AS A RELIGIOUSLY LEARNED AND WORTHY MAN.

DAY OF ASHURA: SHI'A RITUAL

SHI'A

- PREDOMINATELY LOCATED IN THE SOUTH AND ALONG THE IRANIAN BORDER
- KARBALA: MOST HOLY SHI'A SITE IN IRAQ
- IRAQI CENTER OF SHI'A POWER:

  AN-NAJAF
- IRANIAN CENTER OF SHI'A POWER: QOM

SUNNI

- PREDOMINATELY LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL, NORTH, AND EAST
- NO HOLY PLACES IN IRAQ
- PRIVILEGED POSITION DURING SADDAM'S REGIME
- CENTER OF POWER WITHIN THE TRIANGLE: BAGHDAD, ARRAMADI, AL-FALUJA.

POLITICAL MAP OF IRAQ

- **ISLAMIC STREAM**
  - **SUNNI**
  - **SHI'A**
- **NATIONALIST STREAM**
  - **ARABS**
  - **KURDS**

Iraqi Scud Missile Launcher

CENTER OF POWER IN SUNNI COMMUNITY

- ISLAMIC MOVEMENT
  - CONNECTION TO MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD
- ISLAMIC PARTY OF IRAQ
  - SEEKS DIALOGUE WITH IRAQI SHI'A

CENTER OF POWER IN SHI'A COMMUNITY

- AL-HAKEEM GROUP
  - CONNECTION TO IRANIAN SHI'A
- AS-SADR GROUP
  - POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO AMERICANS IN IRAQ

CENTER OF POWER IN SHI'A COMMUNITY

- AS-SISTANI GROUP
  - SEEKS RELIGIOUS STATE IN IRAQ
- AD-DAOWA ISLAMIC PARTY
  - MEMBER IS CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE IRAQI RULING COUNCIL

NATIONAL STREAM

- **ARAB: POWER CENTERED AROUND BA'ATH PARTY. PARTY NO LONGER EXITS.**
- **KURDS: SEEK SEPARATE STATE OR AUTONOMOUS REGION FOR THEMSELVES.**

SUMMARY

- SHI'A IS NEW POWER IN IRAQ
- SUNNI LOST POWER
- KURDS UNCLEAR FUTURE